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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MEPN](#) [UNGA](#) [UNSC](#) [ARABL](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET IN CAIRO TO
PLAN FOR UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REF: A. STATE 145279 (NOTAL)
[1](#)B. CAIRO 5496 (NOTAL)

Classified By: William R. Stewart, Minister-Counselor for Economic and
Political Affairs, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Arab foreign ministers met in Cairo September 5-6 for a regularly-scheduled session, mainly to discuss joint Arab positions on the topics of Lebanon, the Arab-Israeli peace process, and Sudan. A long list of less pressing items were also considered by ministers, but local contacts described the gathering as largely inconsequential. Ministers approved resolutions echoing their August 20 extraordinary session on Lebanon and the peace process, making similar statements of support for the Government of Lebanon and the launching of a new round of Arab-Israeli peace talks under UN Security Council auspices. Ministers announced support for Jordan's candidate as UN Secretary General, but reportedly avoided a formal position on the Venezuela - Guatemala competition for a UN Security Council seat. Embassy translations of AL resolutions on Lebanon, Sudan, and the Arab-Israeli conflict have been e-mailed to NEA/ELA and NEA/RA. End summary.

Ministers Gather in Cairo Ahead of NAM Summit and UNGA

[1](#)2. (SBU) Looking to coordinate joint Arab positions before the September 11-15 NAM Summit in Cuba and the UN General Assembly, foreign ministers from 15 of the Arab League's 22 member states met in Cairo from September 5-6 (ref A). Their fourth ministerial in as many months, the meeting ended early and was characterized by AL staff as largely perfunctory. Contacts described the issue of UN troops for Darfur as the most interesting topic debated.

Arabs to Explore with AU Next Steps on Darfur

[1](#)3. (SBU) A sub-set of AL ministers met early September 6 to review progress on implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) and the issue of UNSCR 1706 and UN troops for Darfur. In their agreed resolution, the ministers stressed the importance of obtaining Khartoum's agreement to the stationing of UN troops in Darfur, and repeated their March Summit pledge to fund the continuation of the African Union's Darfur mission after October first. The ministers urged the League Secretariat to send a delegation to the AU Commission and its Peace and Security Council to hold talks on the AU's Darfur mission. Ministers also highlighted joint Arab

efforts to support development in south Sudan, including implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Familiar Language on Lebanon

¶4. (SBU) Ministers adopted a new Lebanon resolution which largely repeats recent AL documents and statements. The 19-point resolution presented by Lebanese foreign minister Salouk praises Lebanon's "valiant resistance" against Israel's "brutal aggression," and hails the GOL's deployment of its armed forces to the south "so that only the weapon of legitimacy shall prevail" there. The document also calls on Israel to lift its blockade. On Shabaa Farms, the resolution reaffirms support for PM Seniora's 7-point plan, calls on the UN Secretary General to take into account the GOL's plan when he reports to the UNSC, and encourages all concerned parties to "cooperate with the UN to find a solution" to this issue. The resolution also specifically refers to Israeli actions during the conflict with Lebanon as "war crimes that require the perpetrators to be brought to justice."

Arab Initiative to Bring Peace Process to UNSC

¶5. (SBU) Arab ministers also reiterated earlier calls for the UNSC to take up the Arab-Israeli peace process, by holding a ministerial meeting at the Council later this month and by laying out timetables and a framework for peace talks between Israel and its Arab neighbors (ref B).

Arabs to Support Jordanian for UN Secretary General

¶6. (U) Ministers formally agreed to support Jordan's nominee - Price Zaid Bin Raad - for the post of UN Secretary General, and encouraged the Arab Group at the United Nations to begin mobilizing support for the Jordanian candidate (presently Jordan's Permrep in NY).

No Position Taken on UNSC Vote: Venezuela/Guatemala

¶7. (C) According to Arab League Secretariat staff members Talal Elamine and Hala Ghad, no formal statement of support was made during the meetings to support either Venezuela or Guatemala in their respective competition to win a seat on the UN Security Council. Elamine said ministers agreed to "support both" candidates, favoring neither. The Guatemalan DCM told poloff on September 7 that he had heard no news to suggest otherwise, and that Guatemala would proceed in the coming days to sign an agreement in order to strengthen Guatemala's ties to the League.

JONES